

Platanthera chorisiana (Cham.) Reichenb.

Choris' bog-orchid
Orchidaceae (Orchid Family)

Status: State Threatened

Rank: G3S2

General Description: This orchid is a perennial, standing 2 to 6 in. (5 to 15 cm) in height when flowering. The leaves of this species are $\frac{3}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. (2 to 6 cm) in height. The leaves are on the lower 1/3 of the stem and are nearly basal. There are 1 to 3 leaves, which are sub-opposite. The leaves are widest in the middle. Sometimes *P. chorisiana* has lance-shaped, greenish bracts up to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (12 mm) long halfway up the stem, towards the lowest flower clusters. The flowers are positioned towards the top of a somewhat long single stalk in clusters. There are 5 to 18 green flowers attached directly to the stalk, at the flowers' base. The flowers are generally $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (1 to 2 mm) long. Its floral lip is rarely longer than $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ in. ($1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 mm). The spur is less than $\frac{1}{8}$ in. ($1\frac{1}{2}$ mm). The upper sepal is hooded, with a pronounced vein. The remaining three petals have three prominent veins each. A technical key may be required.

Identification Tips: *Platanthera chorisiana* is among the smallest orchids. It is 2 to 6 in. (5 to 15 cm) in height, and is one of the few orchids that have only two nearly basal lanceolate leaves. These two characteristics and its densely flowered spikes should make identification relatively easy.

Phenology: The species has been seen flowering between July and August.

Range: Occurrences of *P. chorisiana* have been documented in southern Alaska to western Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and the Aleutian Islands. It has also been found in Washington in Snohomish and King counties. Washington populations are disjunct from the main range of the species.

Habitat: The species is commonly found in the wettest regions of sphagnum bogs and along streambanks. The species can be found growing on moss-covered rocks. It has been found in open areas at or just above the water table level. Washington sightings of *P. chorisiana* have been common by lakes. In Washington, *P. chorisiana* has been found to associate with *Tsuga mertensiana* (mountain hemlock), *Phyllodoce* sp. (mountain heather), and *Dodecatheon jeffreyi* (Jeffrey's shooting star). It grows at elevations ranging from 2540 - 4300 ft. (774-1301 m) in Washington.

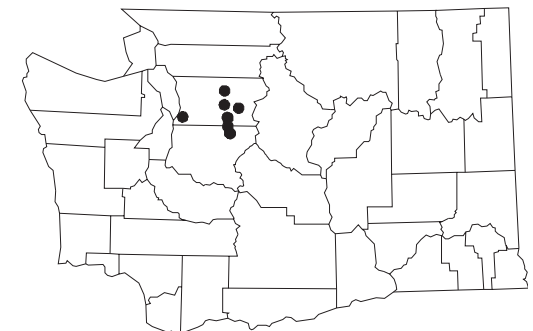
Ecology: *Platanthera chorisiana* has been found in moist areas with fine soils and gravel outwashes with granite substrates.

Platanthera chorisiana

Choris' bog-orchid



Known distribution of
Platanthera chorisiana
in Washington



- Current (1980+)
- Historic (older than 1980)

Platanthera chorisiana

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Photo by Laura Potash

***Platanthera chorisiana* (Cham.) Reichenb.**

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State Status Comments: The species is currently known from nine extant sites in Washington: within the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Inventory Needs: Further inventory of this species is needed in the montane areas of the West Cascades.

Threats and Management Concerns: Timber harvesting, mining, human recreational use (hikers and collectors), and altered hydrology of habitat are current threats to the populations found in Washington.

References:

Flora of North America Editorial Committee, eds. 2002. *Flora of North America*, Vol. 26: *Magoliophyta: Liliidae: Liliales and Orchidales*. Oxford University Press. 723 pp.

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1969. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams, Gymnosperms and Monocotyledons*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 914 pp.

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